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The resolution called for was unanimously adopted by a rising vote.

President ANDERSON: One of the tests of a nation's standard of civilization is its treatment of its archives, which constitute the record of its business at home and abroad. By this test the United States would not take high rank. But a bill has been introduced in Congress which, if passed, will take us out of the class of states which are careless of their public records. The distinguished gentleman who is to address us will explain the need of a national archive building here in Washington, and will doubtless give us illustrations of the difficulties encountered by a student of American history through the careless handling or scattering about of the manuscript records of the business of our government. It seemed to your Program committee that this was a subject in which our Association should have a deep interest; and that, while our influence may not be extensive or powerful, whatever we have should be brought to bear as effectively as possible in favor of the plan for a national archive building. It gives me great pleasure, therefore, to introduce to you Dr. J. FRANKLIN JAMESON, director of the department of historical research of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, who has honored us by consenting to address us on this subject.

#### THE NEED OF A NATIONAL ARCHIVE BUILDING

England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, Prussia, Austria, Hungary, Switzerland, Italy, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Russia, Roumania, Canada, Mexico, Cuba, Colombia—every one of these countries has a national archive, in which all or most of its older records and papers are stored. The presumption must be that there is some merit in the idea of a national archive building. Apparently the burden of proof is on anyone who says that the United States, not the poorest of these

countries and we fondly imagine not the least enterprising, ought not to have one. In reality, no one says this. The obstacle is not opposition, but negligence and inertia, only to be overcome by convincing wise men and influential societies of the need of a federal archive establishment and asking them to help forward the movement toward such a consummation.

The evolution of national archives has in most cases a definite and regular natural history. At first, each government office preserves its own papers. By and by the space available for such documents becomes crowded. The oldest of them, seldom referred to, are sent away, to attics or cellars or vacant rooms in the same or other buildings, it matters little where, in order to make room for the transaction of current business. By and by historians arise. They insist that these dead files are full of historical information, that they are a valuable national asset, that it is shameful to neglect them. At the same time, administrators discover that, whenever administration depends upon the careful study of previous experience, it is inconvenient to have the papers recording that experience scattered through many unsuitable repositories, neglected and unarranged. Then begins a movement for a national archive building, a determination to erect a structure ideally adapted for the storage of documents and their preservation in accessible order and to gather into that one fit place the records which hitherto have lain neglected in a multitude of unfit places. Before the passage of the Public Records Act of 1838, and the consequent erection of the Public Record Office in London, the records of the British government were stored in some sixty different places in that city, some of them atrociously unfit. The building of that admirable repository and its successive enlargements have led to the concentration, under one roof, of the records of nearly all branches of the British administration down to within thirty or forty years of the present time.

The British instance represents a very high degree of concentration. In some other countries, where individual executive departments had long since solidified their respective archives and given them a scientific organization, these collections, instead of being merged in the national archives, have been allowed to maintain a separate existence. Thus in Paris, alongside the Archives Nationales, we find the very important separate establishments of the Archives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, of War, and of Marine, while at Berlin and Vienna, outside the Staatsarchiv, the war departments have independent archives of great importance. Most European ministries, however, retain in their own hands only the papers of recent date.

In any grading of archives by the extent to which concentration has been carried, Great Britain and Canada would stand at the highest end of the scale, while the United States would represent the lowest and simplest stage of development. Here in the national capital it has been the practice, from the beginning, that each bureau or division of an executive department should keep its own records and the papers which flow into it in the course of administrative business. Only one department has undertaken to concentrate its archives, the War Department, nearly all whose records and papers have been combined into one collection, under the custody of the adjutant-general. As for federal archives outside Washington, such as the records and papers of custom houses and army posts, no effort has been made to concentrate them. They remain where they always have been, if indeed they remain at all. While every European government has now adopted the policy of transferring from its embassy or legation here in Washington to its home archives all but the last few years' accumulation of papers, our policy, or more correctly, our practice, has been to leave all the archives of embassies, legations, and consulates where they are

—with effects which can easily be estimated in view of another of our "policies," that of not having permanent homes for our legations in foreign parts.

In Washington the results of what may be called the bureau system of archive management have been exceedingly unhappy. In the first place, it has produced an excessive number of systems of management. To keep a bureau's papers in an order that he who devised it has thought suitable to its business may not seem to be an evil. But the business of bureaus changes, and bureaus are divided and consolidated and extinguished and shifted from department to department, and the result is sometimes an awkward mixture of systems, some of which were amateurish when devised, many of which have become antiquated since that time. But a greater evil than that of having thirty or forty different filing-systems is that of having more than a hundred different repositories. This would not be so great an evil if we had always one variety of papers, and the whole of that variety, in one place; but this is wonderfully far from being the case. Let us take for instance those papers which relate to the history of the government of territories before their admission as states of the Union. The administration of the territories was in the hands of the Department of State till 1873, after that in those of the Department of the Interior. There is no portion of the archival papers of the federal government which is more sought for by historical investigators than these, for the energetic western historical societies find them a copious source of knowledge for the earlier periods. But papers of this sort cannot be found in Washington without special guidance. Many, perhaps most, territorial papers of date anterior to 1873 are at the State Department, but some of them are in the Bureau of Indexes and Archives, some in the Bureau of Rolls and Library, and no man can discern or declare how the line of classification is drawn. Of later papers,

many are in the files of the Secretary of the Interior. For years there was an informal dispute between the two departments as to the transference of certain masses of territorial papers in 1873, the Department of State maintaining that they had been transferred, the Interior Department, more correctly, that they had not. Many territorial papers, of great historical importance, are in the files of the Senate and House of Representatives. Some have been transferred from the latter to the Library of Congress. Others are in the Stygian darkness of the General Land Office files, others in those of the Treasury Department, in those of the Indian Office, in those of the inspector-general of the United States army, or in the enormous archives of the adjutant-general.

But dispersion is not the only, or the worst, evil that has flowed from the present system, or want of system, whereby each bureau is in the main left to keep its own papers. It is 125 years since some of these bureaus and divisions were founded. In much less than 125 years a bureau will accumulate enough records and papers to occupy more than all the space originally assigned to it. Those least needed are packed away, in attics and in cellars, over porticoes and under stairs, in closets and in abandoned doorways, till a building is so full that it will hold no more, if any proper space is to be reserved for the work of officials and clerks. Then warehouses, in almost no case fireproof, are rented to contain the overflow. The Treasury Department has to rent an additional warehouse every five or ten years, merely to hold the fresh accumulation of its papers. Not a mile from this spot, for instance, there is a warehouse in which papers of the Treasury Department have simply been dumped on the floor—boxes, bundles, books, loose papers—till the pile reaches well toward the ceiling; and no man knows what it contains, or could find in it any given book or paper. For quarters of this sort,

in buildings usually unsafe and always unsuitable, the government pays each year, counting only the space devoted to storage of records and papers, rentals aggregating between \$40,000 and \$50,000, more than the interest it would pay on a million. For that sum an excellent archive building could be erected, capable of housing not only all these papers which departments have stored outside their walls, but also all the dead files which occupy space and impede business within the departmental buildings themselves.

These are general statements. Let us mention specific instances. The librarian who is "doing" the sights of Washington may be interested to know, as he gazes at the beautiful proportions of the Treasury Building, that in its attic story several miles of wooden shelving contain old Treasury papers, closely packed together and dry as tinder, which up to the present time have not succumbed to spontaneous combustion under our August sun. If he pauses for a moment to look with pleasure at the sunken fountain at the north end of the Treasury, it may augment his pride in the ingenuity of his government to know that a portion of its Treasury archives is stored in chambers constructed around the substructure of the fountain. If by mistake he goes to the old building of the Corcoran Art Gallery instead of the new, he will be compensated by the unusual sight, in the basement, of a body of governmental records so stored that in a dry season they can be consulted by any person wearing rubber overshoes, while in a wet season they are accessible by means of some old shutters laid on the basement floor. At the General Land Office (really the worst case of all) he may see a body of archives representing the titles to four hundred million acres of formerly public but now private lands, stored in a place not, I think, as fit for the purpose as the average librarian's coal-cellar—certainly not as fit as mine. If he goes into the Pension Office building, he will find the rich and interesting

archives of the Indian Office stored in the court-yard. As he looks at the small dome that surmounts the House wing of the Capitol, he may reflect with pleasure that the old files of the House of Representatives are stored, in open boxes, in a manner not unlike that formerly followed by country lawyers, in the stifling heat of the space between roof and ceiling of the dome.

Danger of destruction by fire is constant under such circumstances. It is surprising that fires have not been more frequent. But they have occurred several times in former years, and only last summer a fire in the building of the Geological Survey burned up papers which it had cost \$100,000 to produce. There are half a dozen places in Washington where, if an extensive fire should break out, it might in a few hours, by burning up the documents with which claims against the government are defended, cause the government to lose several times the cost of a good national archive building.

Probably there is no repository for government papers in Washington, except the Division of Manuscripts in the Library of Congress, which is strictly fireproof in the fullest sense; but danger from fire is not the only peril to which archives are now exposed. Some of the places where they are stored are damp. In others there is local dampness from steam pipes and leaky roofs. In many there is injury from dust and dirt, in nearly all the grossest overcrowding. As to search and use, it is sometimes impossible, usually difficult. So dark are many repositories that when Messrs. Van Tyne and Leland were preparing their Guide to the Archives of the Government in Washington, an electric searchlight was a necessary part of their equipment. Armed with this, they could read the labels on the bundles or the legends on the backs of bound volumes, whenever these had not rotted off from dampness or excessive dryness. By way of contrast to the literary search-rooms

in the Public Record Office in London or the Archives Nationales in Paris, in which fifty or a hundred historical scholars can work amid conditions resembling those which you, ladies and gentlemen, offer to readers in your libraries, the courageous student of this country's history is fortunate if, after the volume or bundle has been dragged from its darksome lair, an obliging clerk—and nearly all government clerks in Washington are obliging—clears upon some heavily burdened desk or table a space two feet square which the student can use for the study of his documents.

To me, and to many of those who hear me, the main reason for interesting ourselves in the problems of a national archive building is that present conditions interpose almost intolerable obstacles to the progress of history. We may reasonably expect that this should also seem to legislators a serious matter. An enlightened government, a government whose success depends on the intelligence of public opinion, cannot afford to be indifferent to the advancement of historical knowledge. The government of the United States should do far more for it than it does. It would be a perfectly justifiable expenditure if on this ground alone, merely as the first step toward a proper cultivation of the national history, our government should spend \$1,000,000 or \$1,500,000 in erecting a perfect archive building, in which the historian could find and use his materials. But as the actual world goes, we are to expect business considerations to have greater weight than the interests of history. Very well. Put the matter on that ground. Is it good business for a government to spend \$50,000 a year for rental of bad quarters, when for the same sum capitalized it could build magnificent quarters with much greater capacity? Is it good business for a government that can borrow at three per cent to pay rentals of ten per cent? It certainly is not thought so when the question is one of building local post-offices.

The trusts and other great business corporations think it indispensable to have the most modern filing-systems, installed in fireproof buildings. To neglect such precautions may some day cost them too much; to be unable to find papers quickly would cost them too much every day. But the greatest of all American business organizations is the Treasury Department of the United States. Its papers accumulate at the rate of 25,000 cubic feet per annum. It needs at this moment not less than 600,000 cubic feet of space in a modern archive building. What has it, this greatest of business concerns in the most businesslike of countries? It has an attic with miles of wooden shelving on which its papers crumble and fall to pieces from heat, and a sub-basement in which they rot to pieces from dampness. It rents two floors and part of another floor in a storage warehouse on E Street, a warehouse on New York Avenue, part of a building on C Street, part of a building on Fourteenth Street, part of a building on F Street. Two of these it will soon give up, happy to use instead the cast-off building of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. It uses the basement of the old Court of Claims building and a part of the old Post-Office building, and has filled the old Winder building with files until it was forced to stop because the floors could not safely bear any more weight. If a paper more than forty years old, of certain sorts, is desired, it may take several days to find it. I do not need to ask whether this is intelligent and economical administration. I have wished merely to emphasize the thought that, if this national archive building comes into existence, as surely it some time will, it will be brought into being, less by the clamor of historians, a feeble folk relatively, than by the steady and powerful pressure of administrators, worried beyond endurance by the increase of files and painfully conscious of the drag which primitive methods of storage impose on the progress of government business.

Administrative eagerness to find a remedy has sought more than one outlet. One is the destruction of useless papers, but this is only a partial remedy. It is perfectly true that many papers of little or no worth beyond the year of their origin have been preserved. One might wish that some of these were burned up. Under existing conditions, as I have shown, some of them are likely to be. But a conflagration cannot be expected to make an intelligent selection of material, and government officials, for that matter, cannot do it perfectly. We have statutes for the destruction of useless papers, but they are very loose in comparison with those of Europe, and give no security that papers useless for administration but valuable for history will be preserved. Not so many years ago, ten tons of Confederate records were barely rescued from the paper-mill, and the schedules of the earlier censuses, though since then the latter have formed the basis of valued historical publications.

Another expedient that has been occasionally suggested has been the transfer of "dead files" to the Library of Congress. It needs but a little thought upon considerations of space to show the futility of such a plan. Where should the Library of Congress find space for two or three million cubic feet of archive material? Some might say that at least such papers as are historically important might be sent to the Library. But, quite apart from the fact that this offers no relief to the government, which as we have seen is the greatest sufferer from the present conditions, it is impossible to accept the underlying assumption that there is a small and perfectly distinguishable portion of the government archives which is historically important, while the rest is not. A jury of the most experienced historians would be the first to declare that no one can tell what the historians of the next age will value as materials, and the first to protest against a process of tearing away certain papers,

assumed to be historical, from the remaining series with which they have been associated and which help to explain their origin. Moreover, library administration is one thing, and archive administration, especially for purposes of government business as distinguished from purposes of history, is a quite different thing. The present Librarian of Congress could administer an archive alongside his library, indeed could administer forty archives, because he could administer anything. But that hardly covers the point. Essentially a librarian's business is different from an archivist's business; no national government combines the two, and, anyhow, a makeshift transference of a small part of the government's archives to the Library of Congress would be no real solution of the difficulties.

The only satisfactory and proper means of escape from the present disgraceful conditions is that which other nations have adopted, the erection of a national archive building in this city, of a size sufficient to contain all the papers that all the executive departments and the Senate and House of Representatives may send to it, and with a large allowance for future growth. Essentially a honeycomb of stacks resembling those of a library, it should have an initial capacity of three million cubic feet, and should be built on a lot of land large enough to admit of extension to nine million without exceeding the height usual among our government buildings. The prediction can be made with confidence, and is supported by the experience of other nations, that while executive officers may at first transfer somewhat sparingly the records and papers they have long had nominally under their control, they will not take long to discover that needles can be more quickly found in a needle-shop than in a haystack; and as the advantages of an orderly archive come to be appreciated, more and more of the archival papers will be transferred to the new establishment.

Yet, though it shall be large, our national archive building need not be alarmingly expensive. No ornate palace should be contemplated. If the exterior is to suit the contents, it should be plain, yet it may easily be beautiful. I know from the word of a friend that the greatest architect of the last generation said that he should like nothing better than to try his hand on a national archive building. At a cost well inside fifty cents a cubic foot, or \$1,500,000 for a building of the dimensions I have described, it should be possible for the United States to have the finest archive building in the world, perfect in every appointment, based on the best experience of Europe, and adequate for every purpose of the immediate future. This is the end toward which we ought to aspire and labor.

Into the details of the construction of such a building and of the organization of an archive establishment there is no time to enter. They are abundantly set forth in Mr. W. G. Leland's masterly article entitled "Our national archives: a programme," in the *American Historical Review* for October, 1912.

Efforts to secure such a building as I have in general terms described have not been lacking, nor are they a thing of yesterday. As far back as 1878, the quartermaster-general of the army recommended the erection of a "hall of records" for preservation of the records of the executive departments not required for daily reference, and drafted a plan for the proposed structure. That was thirty-six years ago. Since then there has perhaps been only one year in which the erection of a national archive building has not been pressed upon the attention of Congress, with greater or less urgency, by one or other members of the cabinet. At least fifty bills on the subject have been introduced in Congress. Nearly all have found permanent resting-places in the pigeonholes of committees. On two occasions, in 1881 and in 1902, the Senate passed bills providing for an archive

building; but the House took no action on them. Finally, in 1903, after an agitation covering a quarter of a century, Congress authorized the purchase of a site for such a building. The site was purchased, but has since been assigned to another building. Meanwhile, within the thirty-six years during which this agitation by executive departments has been going on, Congress has expended at least \$250,000,000 for public buildings, and \$200,000,000 of that sum for local post-offices, courthouses and customhouses.

In recent years, the agitation has been taken up by various societies of patriotic intention. Nearly six years ago the American Historical Association addressed Congress on the subject, appointed a committee, arranged for useful hearings, and has continued to press the matter upon successive Congresses. Many chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution have taken part in the endeavor. Recently the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution has taken it up with much energy. The Public Buildings Act of March 3, 1913, authorized the Secretary of the Treasury to make plans for an archive building; but Congress made no appropriation of money for the planning, and without it nothing could be done. The result of thirty-six years of agitation can be summed up by saying that an item of \$5,000 for the making of such plans, in the provisional manner in which alone they can be made before a site is selected, is now before the House Committee on Appropriations, as a part of the Sundry Civil Appropriations bill. Its fate will be known in a few days. This result, after thirty-six years of entreaty and appeal along lines of argument which were obvious thirty-six years ago and in thirty-six years have not been confuted, seems somewhat meagre. But I remember that it was about 1616 when one Francis Bacon recommended the establishment of a General Record Office for the kingdom of England and about 1856 when the first section of that building

was erected. Two hundred and forty years, for a thing for which that capacious mind foresaw all the convincing arguments in 1616! We have still some time. Two hundred and forty years from 1878 would bring us only to 2118 A. D. But can we not beat the English record? Can we not, by keeping public opinion alive on a subject of so much importance from the historical and the governmental points of view, carry this great national undertaking along steadily through the stages of making plans, acquiring a site, and constructing the building, and have an archive to be proud of before we have here a national calamity resembling, but with perhaps larger proportions, the great fire at Albany?

President ANDERSON: The Program committee thought it would be interesting to have the subject of Dr. Jameson's address discussed very briefly by two members of our Association. I will therefore call upon the chief of the division of manuscripts in the Library of Congress, Dr. GAILLARD HUNT.

Dr. HUNT: I have nothing to add to the paper that does not corroborate from personal knowledge and study what Dr. Jameson says. His paper is what we are accustomed to receive from one who has been aptly termed, "the dean of the historical profession in America."

I will supplement some of his observations. First, as to the difference in the policy of administration between a government archive and a government library, let me remark that while it is true that the problems of arrangement, of classification, of conservation, of cataloging are different, nevertheless, a government library is the only government institution that considers those problems, and there is a family resemblance between them, whether they are applied in a library or an archive repository. I can illustrate this by telling you that the present arrangement of the archives of the State Department, which was inaugurated when Mr. Root was Secretary of State



and which has proved to be very satisfactory, is an adaptation of the Dewey decimal system of subjective treatment.

Dr. Jameson says that none of the European countries have the archives and the library together. That is a fact, but it is a fact of weakness both in the administration and to the investigator. Every student who has been to England is aware that he must play shuttlecock between the Public Record Office and the British Museum. He is aware, too, that the British Museum and the Public Record Office are in a measure in competition with each other and not in the fullest coöperation, and that the ideal condition would be to have the manuscripts now deposited in the Museum and the public archives together, or in such close coördination that one would hardly be able to distinguish between them.

But this is only a detail. As the curator of the largest collection of historical manuscripts on the hemisphere, I say, Give us a government archive, and we will attend to the coöperation. Let the great fact be accomplished, and whether a government archive should absorb the Library of Congress, or the Library of Congress should absorb a government archive, can be left to the future to decide. You may be sure that both will proceed in complete coördination and coöperation.

Dr. Jameson is correct. There is not in the city of Washington a single government department that knows what it has in its archives; there is not one that knows what it has not got; there is not one where all the archives are available for historical or administrative purposes.

We are about to approach a commemoration of peace, but war sometimes confers favors in unexpected quarters. And the War of 1812 and the invasion of the city of Washington by the British were great boons to some of the curators of government archives in Washington. Whenever any archives antedating 1814 cannot be found, blame it on the war of 1812! This has become such a habit that I have known a clerk, when a paper was called

for, to reply promptly: "The British destroyed it in the war of 1812," when that particular paper was dated in 1815. There are the archives of the House of Representatives, for example. That institution was sacked by the British while the Senate escaped. The House archives, we have been often told, were destroyed. Now, ladies and gentlemen, I have seen the archives of the House of Representatives, and how on earth the British in 1814 destroyed more papers dated in 1815 than in 1813 I do not quite understand! The archives immediately after 1814 are a little bit worse than the archives before 1814.

It is not necessary to add a word to what Dr. Jameson has said about the necessity of the preservation of archives for the use of the historian. In speaking to an audience of librarians, that goes without saying, as all of you are engaged in the business of conserving the record of knowledge in order that it may serve historical purposes. We are all agreed that for historical purposes it is absolutely necessary that the archives should be better preserved than they are; but from abundance of experience I may say a word about the necessity of the preservation of the archives for administrative purposes. Ours is a popular government and its personnel changes, and every three or four years the head of a department changes and his chief subordinates are changed. He comes from active political life, active professional life, or active business life. He never comes from active department life. For him there is the duty of carrying out some broad policy upon which the people have voted. But he is the head of a great machine. Dr. Jameson says that the Treasury Department is the largest corporation in the United States; but very nearly as large are the Interior Department and the Post-office Department. In fact, we have in Washington the largest corporation in the United States represented by the government; but the head of each branch of the corporation, in the nature of things, knows little of the machinery over which

he presides. It is a complicated machinery. We who live in Washington know that the government departments have power over individual rights and over public rights, that is put into effect daily and hourly. The decisions that are made on the innumerable questions that arise are like the decisions of the courts. They follow one another; they depend upon precedent. Those decisions are a part of the records of the departments. They cannot be correctly reached unless the records are available, and all the records are not available. The result is that the decisions of the department are not always correct, that they are sometimes contradictory, and that there is an enormous waste of time in going over and over again the ground that has been gone over before, but the record of which is not readily accessible or may be lost. In my experience I have seen it a hundred times—the new official treading laboriously the path that has been trodden by one of equal ability with himself in the past and usually reaching the same conclusions, when, if the record had been put before him, he could have saved his time and the continuity or stability of government practice would not have been endangered. More in our government—where the head of a department constantly changes, where the head of a bureau constantly changes—more than in other governments where there is a governing class, is it necessary that there should be conservation of the record of what has been done before.

I was reading the other night Hume's History of England, and I came across this remark: He said that the regret frequently expressed by historical scholars that there was no record of the proceedings of the original Britons was a regret that was uncalled for, because the actions of barbarians are based upon impulse and not upon reason, and really furnish nothing of entertainment or instruction to the civilized man. I could not help thinking that the fathers of our country, who have had the management of our government,

must have thought that they were barbarians, and that it was better to destroy a record which contained nothing that would be of profit or of interest to their posterity.

Now, one of the faults I have to find with us librarians is that we are prone to look upon a piece of work, because we love it, as an end unto itself. But, as I see it, we discuss a question with a definite object in view. So in discussing Dr. Jameson's paper we must remember that we are not appealing to ourselves, that we are not discussing it for our own pleasure, but that we are doing it in order to reach a body of men upon Capitol Hill who have the power to do what we want done. Let us remember that before we are librarians we are citizens of the United States, that the present condition of our records is a disgrace to each and all of us, and that we can change it. When Congress sits, a thousand measures press for consideration. It takes up those for which the pressure is obvious. There is only one thing necessary for us to do, therefore, and that is to crystallize the belief that is in each and every one of us here tonight, that we need and must have an archive building, into an obvious demand. Embody it into joint action of the whole society, and individual importunity on the part of every member, and success will crown our efforts.

President ANDERSON: For a further discussion of Dr. Jameson's paper I have pleasure in calling upon a member of this Association, who is also chairman of the Public Archives Commission of the American Historical Association, Mr. VICTOR HUGO PALTSITS.

Mr. PALTSITS: We have been reminded of the importance of conserving manuscripts in order that there might be some better judgment than fire in weeding them out. A few years ago I had the opportunity to speak for some time during a summer vacation with a former speaker of Congress, and our conversation drifted to the accumulation of records in this capital city. He mentioned the fact that from the first census until the census just

preceding the time of our conversation there had accumulated great masses of schedules, and that a congressional committee had determined that some of these might be burned in order to make room in the city of Washington. And he said with characteristic English that may not be repeated in polite society, "Why, you ought to have heard the howl from all over the United States from everybody who has ancestors." Well, I tried to impress upon him the fact that even schedules might have value. It is the business of the Public Archives Commission of the American Historical Association to promote a conscience not only here, but throughout the nation—a conscience that will respect the muniments of the American people, whether they repose in federal depositories or whether they be in states, counties, cities, towns, boroughs or villages.

Dr. Jameson's description of conditions in Washington reminded me of some of the things I have heard with reference to village records stored over barber shops, furniture shops and paint shops, usually associated with the greatest means to conflagration. We are interested in conservation, we are interested in coördination, and here in Washington the problem of coördination rests upon the provision of a national archive building. Why is it that administrative records are so usually neglected, whilst the title deeds, the testamentary archives and the records of courts are, I might say, always better kept than any others? In fact, the others may merely exist under similar conditions to those portrayed to us respecting the Treasury papers in Washington. It is because there is a bench and a bar active in every community. It is because testamentary papers and title deeds represent money—an immediate or apparent asset to the people.

Now, with the same spirit of earnestness exhibited by the legal profession and by the courts, the body of American historical scholars, the body of American economic scholars, the body of American political scientists and similar national

bodies appeal to the conscience of Congress for the conservation, for the coördination, for the proper administration of the great federal archives. We are not willing, Dr. Jameson, I am sure, to wait for more than two centuries for proper provisions, as the people and our friends of Great Britain waited.

Recently in the city of New York during an examination of various departmental records, I found the administration records less cared for than the title records, the testamentary records and the court records. The records of the county clerk of the city and county of New York are mostly in the Hall of Records building, erected at an expense of some \$12,000,000, I believe. They are on the eighth floor and in the attic above, in the custody of the commissioner of records of the county, and in that jurisdiction there is a fine modern steel equipment for the records, which consist of those of the old chancery and vice-chancery courts; the now extinct court of oyer and terminer; the court of common pleas; the supreme court, etc., all records of a legal nature. This steel equipment has cost some \$400,000 for this department. In the same building are the records of the surrogates' court, and they have an equipment of their own in modern form, with indexes of all records kept according to law; and in the same building are the records of the register, filed on roller shelves and in metal cabinets. During the past three years the city and county of New York alone has spent \$100,000 each year for the re-indexing bureau of the register's office, to index and coördinate the conveyances and open mortgages of the pieces of property in the original county of New York, and that territory known as the Bronx recently separated from it, upon a block and section system. When we go into our finance department records, Dr. Jameson, we find conditions perhaps a little better than you do in the Treasury Department; yet there are evidences of neglect and great disorder. The only way by which we can bring about a

better system, particularly with regard to the administrative records, and with reference to all the records, is by a united effort of every national or local body interested in culture, in patriotism and in good government, and on behalf of the American Library Association, as one of its members, I have the honor to present to the Association a brief resolution, and ask, after it be read, that it be committed to the Council for its consideration.

The resolution was here read and by unanimous vote referred with approval to the Council. (For text of resolution see minutes of Council, page 185-6.)

Dr. ANDREWS: Mr. President, in seconding Mr. Paltsits' motion for a reference to the Council I should like to couple with it a vote of thanks of the Association to Dr. Jameson for the clear and able manner in which he has presented to us a question of great national importance.

President ANDERSON: I am sure it is only necessary to call for the "ayes" on that motion.

There is no subject of more vital interest to this country than the Americanization of its immigrants. The next speaker has given this subject a great deal of study. While he was a student at Oxford University, having learned to speak Italian, he spent his summer vacations among the Italian people in their native land, living their daily life and becoming as nearly one of them as an American could. Returning to his own country, he transferred his interest to the Italians who had emigrated to America. Through close observation and association he learned the immigrants' need for practical instruction in the little things of their daily life here. To make a long story short, he found that there were no books in Italian to give the newly arrived immigrant the information he most needed in his daily life in this country. At about the same time the Connecticut Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution awoke to the need of such a book, and asked Mr. Carr to

write it. The result is what is popularly called "The little green book," although a translation of the correct title is "A guide to the United States for the Italian immigrant." Someone has truly called it also, "A guide to the Italian immigrant." In recognition of his services to Italians in this country the King of Italy about two years ago made Mr. Carr a Chevalier of the Order of the Crown of Italy. "The little green book" proved to be so useful that there sprang up in various parts of the country a demand for a book of the same kind in other languages. So far it has been issued in three languages, Italian, Polish and Yiddish, with variations in each case to suit the particular needs of each nationality. An English translation of the Yiddish edition has also been published, which I would cordially commend to anyone who is interested in the immigrant. The author is director of the Immigrant Publication Society, whose offices are in New York City, and he has some practical ideas on the part played by the library in the Americanization of the immigrant. It gives me great pleasure to introduce Mr. JOHN FOSTER CARR, who will speak to us on "The library and the immigrant."

#### THE LIBRARY AND THE IMMIGRANT

The library was long a sort of institutional Lord Bacon. All learning was its province. Now its province has become all life—first of all, American life—and it is already the greatest of our popular universities. It is ever seeking larger powers of usefulness, and striking is its development along simpler and humbler lines.

In the new duties that immigration has brought, it is unquestionably meeting the greatest educational problem yet unattempted in this country. The Census Bureau states the size and significance of that problem when it announces that there are four million foreign-born white men of voting age in the United States, who are not citizens, and two million men and